MOSAIC: Multi Organizational Situational Assessment in Crisis
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**Introduction**

Major disasters commonly involve many organizational and emergent actors. These actors are expected to be able to cooperate in order to solve the problems associated with the hazard. However, working together is not easy given that units enter the multi-organizational system from different perspectives that can lead to differing definitions, priorities, and decisions particularly in uncertain contexts. On one hand, this variety leads to the kinds of diverse information and knowledge needed during crises, on the other, harnessing that potential is difficult. All too often, the person or people who happen to end up in authority simply define the situation and to makes decisions in a way that excludes others views.

Given the reality above this project aims to understand if and how organizations work through their differences. More specifically, we will explore how organizational, professional, and institutional pressures influence collective sense making and multi-organizational cooperation under uncertainty.

**Conceptual and Implications**

The diagram below is a theoretical representation of the collective sense making process. It elaborates our view of the organizational influences on multi-stakeholder cooperation in uncertain situations and shows how collective sense making (green boxes) under uncertainty is influenced by organizational and professional sense making (blue boxes), by institutional pressures (grey boxes,) and the characteristics of the situation at hand (orange box.)

![Diagram](image)

**Methods**

In order to empirically explore the model above, an experiment was developed and carried out in a VR-laboratory at Mid Sweden University, with professionals from two emergency organizations and a nursing home, representing a wide variety of length of professional experience.

The participants each watched a 5-minute long film showing an uncertain potential crisis situation. The film scenario was a suspected bomb right outside a nursing home. At six points the film paused for 30 seconds and questions were asked about how the participant perceived the situation, what they intended to do next, and about their communication to others about the situation. After the film the respondent was interview with follow-up questions.

In addition to the experiment, a series of workshops have been conducted involving mixed groups of professionals. The same film was shown to the full group of participants. At the time for questions the participants noted their immediate response, after which small groups (6-8 persons) discussed their respective answers. After the movie, the full group gave their reflections on the exercise and discussed the results and its potential implications.

**Preliminary Results**

The result show that the professionals from the three different organizations to a certain degree did reach a shared operating picture, but they differed in creating a shared understanding of the situation.

The professionals from the different organizations all physically perceived the bomb as a bomb, as something that could explode. The difference was how they assessed the situation, were the police had the most elaborated view of the bomb, what to expect, and also anticipated a perpetrator. Both the fire fighters and the personnel at the elderly care would await the police to take charge.

On the other hand – only the professionals from the elderly care had routine information on how to best evacuate elderly people. When the police and fire fighters talked about pulling the fire alarm or making everyone evacuate the building, going through all rooms, the personnel at the nursing home said: “I think I would ask the residents’ to come the for a coffee and some cakes in the next building”. This is something they often do and it would be the quickest way to evacuate.